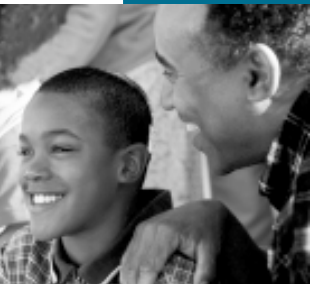


Kids Never Forget A Mentor



Facts about Youth Mentoring Programs at DSHS

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is part of a coalition of community-based organizations across Washington that are providing mentors for

at-risk youth - and recruiting suitable adults so that every youth who needs a mentor gets one.

DSHS administers a grant of \$250,000, appropriated by Governor Locke and the Legislature, to a non-profit organization - the Washington State Mentoring Partnership.

The \$250,000 in state funds is being matched by private dollars to enhance recruitment and support and training of mentors for at-risk youth.

The Mentoring Partnership is co-chaired by Lt. Governor Brad Owen and former Washington State University football star Jack Thompson.

As a further DSHS contribution to the Mentoring Partnership, DSHS has assigned Tom Pennella as a loaned executive to serve as Deputy Director of the Partnership.

Within DSHS, Secretary Dennis Braddock has directed formation of a Youth Mentoring Roundtable, which brings strategic focus to the combined resources of several programs that recruit mentors for DSHS clients who need them.

DSHS programs provide mentors to youth who:

- ☐ Have families afflicted by abuse of drugs or alcohol, or both.
- ☐ Are living in foster care because their birth families cannot or will provide adequate care for them.
- ☐ Are in juvenile rehabilitation.
- ☐ Are learning to live and excel with disabilities.
- ☐ Families are working toward self-sufficiency.

Kids need mentors as never before

According to the Statewide Mentoring Partnership's 2004 State of Mentoring Report, 240,000 youth in Washington are at-risk and need the mentoring of a caring adult. Only 20,000 - 8 percent - have mentors.

Mentoring works

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy has studied the mentoring program in Washington's juvenile justice system, finding it reduced recidivism, or re-offending, and returns \$3.58 of benefit to society for every dollar spent.

Research consistently shows that kids benefit from relationships with caring adults in addition to parents. A study of 1,000 young people for Big Brothers Big Sisters showed that, compared to other groups, children with mentors were 46 % less likely to begin using illegal drugs, 27% less likely to begin using alcohol, 53 % less likely to skip school, 33% less likely to engage in school violence. They also showed improved peer and family relationships.

Kids want mentors, and they never forget their mentors

Since 1998, when Kathy started mentoring LaRae in King County, Washington, they have been each other's best cheerleaders, encouraging each other to achieve their dreams. After LaRae's car accident, LaRae realized how much Kathy meant to her. Kathy returned the admiration by saying, "LaRae has changed my life."

Says LaRae: "Mentors - what do they mean? First and foremost - support, friendship, love, someone to talk to. What it has meant to me is knowing that every Friday I have something to look forward to. Kathy has been there through thick and thin. No matter what it is, she is there. It doesn't matter where, when, what or how; she will do what it takes to solve the issue. Mentors are one of the best things that have ever happened to me."

Says Kathy: "LaRae and I matched in Echo Glen (juvenile rehabilitation center) on Jan. 10, 1998. She was released and sent to a group home. My plan was to be consistent and commit to visiting her once a week as the JRA (DSHS Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration) mentor training had recommended. Her goals were

in order: school, job hunt, and then get an apartment. I called Hazel Cameron, my supervisor, often, for guidance. I received the professional support that I needed and was able to develop a relationship with LaRae.

I am very lucky to have her in my life I have many rewards for being a mentor and I love her."

You can be the one who makes the difference

Think back to your childhood and your teen years.

Who mentored you?

Have you thanked them?

Have you passed on what they gave to you?

Besides a personal expression of your gratitude to them, mentoring a youth today is another way you can thank them - by passing it on.

Phone number to call/website to visit

Contact: Tom Pennella, DSHS Youth Mentoring Roundtable,
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e-mail: pennetx@dsht.wa.gov

DSHS youth mentoring:
dsht.wa.gov/youthmentoring
Washington State Mentoring Partnership:
www.mentoring.org/washington/

Also:

Washington State Heart Gallery:
Opening Hearts through the Arts.

<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/heartgallery/index.html>

"How To Help" brochure: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/ea/HGhelpguide.pdf>